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Extrajudicial execution

2 May 1991

GUATEMALA

Dinora José PÉREZ VALDEZ (f)

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Amnesty International is concerned at the apparent extrajudicial execution of Dinora José Pérez Valdez, 28, a member of the board of the Fundación de Proyectos del Área Rural para Guatemala (FUNDAGUA), Rural Projects Foundation for Guatemala, a non-government organization that carries out research into socio-economic and political issues in Guatemala and provides training for trade union and popular leaders.

According to the information received by Amnesty International, Dinora José Pérez Valdez was gunned down at about 7.00 pm on 29 April by two heavily armed men on a red and white motorcycle as she was getting into her car, parked outside her home in Zone 7 of Guatemala City.

Dinora José Pérez Valdez was also the director of the Instituto María Chinchilla, a women's development organization, and had been a candidate to the national assembly for the Social-Democratic political grouping Alianza Popular-5 in the November 1990 elections. She also worked in the organization of the Jornadas por la Vida y por la Paz, a series of meetings organized in 1990 by Christian communities and popular movements to discuss issues of peace and human rights in Guatemala. Dinora Pérez had, as a representative of FUNDAGUA, been involved in the training of peasant and indigenous leaders in conjunction with the Consejo de Comunidades Etnicas "Runujel Junam" (CERJ), Council of Ethnic Communities "We are all Equal", an organization working for the protection of indigenous peoples' rights and a long-term target of human rights abuses.

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

President Jorge Serrano Elías took office in Guatemala in January 1991. During his presidential campaign he had pledged to ensure protection of human rights. In April several policemen were sentenced for human rights violations against street children, and the establishment of a commission of inquiry into the "disappearance" of over 40,000 people since the early 1980s was announced. However, Amnesty International remains seriously concerned at what appears to be a deterioration in the human rights situation in the country in past weeks, including killings, torture and harassment directed against those involved in popular organizations and human rights activists. Victims have, as in past years, included students, trade unionists and members of human rights organizations such as CERJ and the Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo por el Aparecimiento con Vida de Nuestros Familiares (GAM), Mutual Support Group for the Appearance of Our Relatives Alive. In most cases the choice of victim, the manner in which the abuses were carried out and the weapons used have indicated the involvement of the official security forces in the guise of the so-called "death squads". Those researching into the socio-political issues in the country have also been the victims of human rights violations. In September 1990, sociologist and anthropologist Myrna Mack Chang, 40, was stabbed to death. At the time of her death she was working with the Asociación para el Avance de las Ciencias

Sociales en Guatemala (AVANCSO), Association for the Advancement of Social Sciences in Guatemala, and preparing a study on the impact of agricultural diversification on indigenous peoples (see "Killing of Myrna Elizabeth Mack Chang, aged 40", AI Index AMR 34/55/90, September 1990).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at the killing of Dinora José Pérez Valdez in circumstances suggesting that she may have been extrajudicially executed;
- urging that a full, impartial investigation be opened into her killing;
- asking that the findings be made public and that those responsible be brought to justice.

PLEASE ALSO BRING THIS CASE TO THE ATTENTION OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS WORKING ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

APPEALS TO

S.E. Jorge Serrano Elías  
Presidente de la República de  
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Señor Acicslo Valladares  
Procurador General de la Nación  
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Padre Andrés Girón León  
Presidente  
Comisión de Derechos Humanos  
Congreso Nacional de la República  
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Guatemala, GUATEMALA

and to diplomatic representatives of Guatemala in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 12 June 1991.

